

BACK TO PRABHUPADA

The magazine of the real Hare Krishna movement

SPECIAL ISSUE No. 2

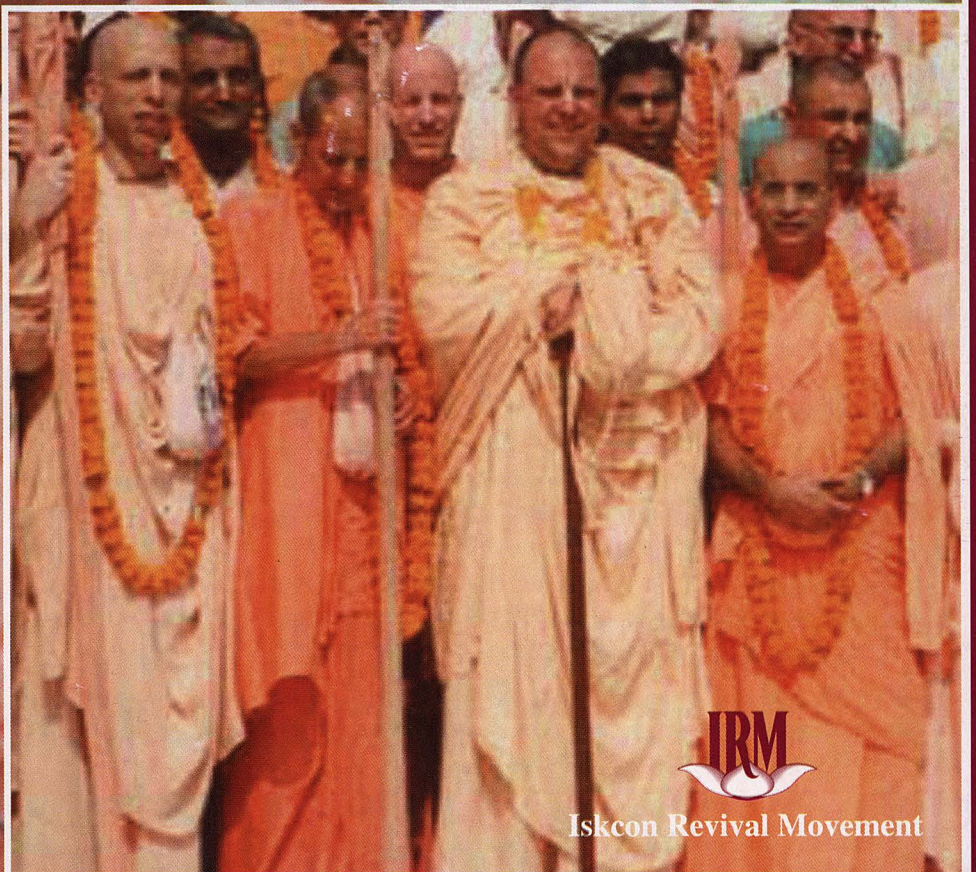
"Defeating tyranny in the realm of thought"

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ISKCON leaders: In their own words

SPECIAL
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Above photo:
His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada
ISKCON's real Guru



Iskcon Revival Movement

BACK TO PRABHUPADA

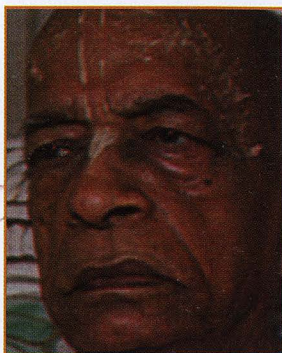
SPECIAL ISSUE No. 2

Editor: Krishnakant

Founded under the inspiration of:
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 Founder-Acarya, International Society
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In their own words

Hare Krishna and welcome to the second *Back To Prabhupada* (BTP) Special Issue! The first BTP Special Issue was a summary edition in which we proved, using Srila Prabhupada's statements, that he alone is the *diksa* Guru (initiating spiritual master) for ISKCON. In this second Special Issue, entitled "In their own words", we now prove, through the use of over 100 quotes exclusively from ISKCON's leadership, that their words agree with the main conclusions of the ISKCON Revival Movement (IRM).

"In their own words" is a compilation of teachings from ISKCON's leaders as given in the panel below:

GBC (Governing Body Commission)*

HH Tamala Krishna Goswami, (late) ISKCON guru and GBC
 HH Bhakti Charu Swami, ISKCON guru and GBC
 HH Radhanath Swami, ISKCON guru and GBC
 HG Ravindra Svarupa Das, ISKCON guru and GBC
 HH Sivarama Swami, ISKCON guru and GBC
 HH Hridayananda Das Goswami, ISKCON guru and GBC
 HH Jayapataka Swami, ISKCON guru and GBC
 HH Prahladananda Swami, ISKCON guru and Sannyasa Minister
 HH Trivikrama Swami, ISKCON guru
 HH Indradyumna Swami, ISKCON guru
 HH Candramauli Swami, ISKCON guru
 HH Jayadvaita Swami, ISKCON guru
 HH Bhakti Vikash Swami, ISKCON guru
 HH Janananda Goswami, ISKCON guru
 HG Sankarshan Das, ISKCON guru
 HG Kripamoya Das, European ISKCON Leaders Chairman
 HG Rasamandala Das, Co-ordinator, ISKCON Education Services
 HG Gauri Das, Temple President, Bhaktivedanta Manor **

* the ultimate managing authority for ISKCON

** headquarters of ISKCON UK Above positions correct at time of press (Jan 2008)

As can be seen, those who have been quoted constitute a veritable listing of ISKCON's current leadership, including the full GBC body itself.

On the following pages, you will read a key IRM conclusion regarding Srila Prabhupada and ISKCON (which we have already established using Srila Prabhupada's statements in the first BTP Special Issue, other BTP issues and our position papers such as *The Final Order*), followed by copious quotes from ISKCON's leadership agreeing to the same. So without further ado let us hear directly from ISKCON's leaders themselves, and read for ourselves just what they are saying now, "In their own words".

Please feel free to write to me at the following address if you have any questions, criticisms or comments: irm@iskconirm.com

Thank you and Hare Krishna.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada,
Krishnakant

For more information, and letters to the editor, please write to:

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PART A: Srila Prabhupada is ISKCON's *diksa* Guru

1. Srila Prabhupada only ordered *ritviks* (priests), not gurus

IRM says:

Srila Prabhupada only appointed *ritviks* to act on his behalf, who were never ordered to cease acting as *ritviks*, and therefore should have remained as *ritviks* (modification "A" from *The Final Order*).

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"Actually Prabhupada never appointed any gurus. He appointed eleven *ritviks*. He never appointed them gurus. Myself and the other GBC have done the greatest disservice to this movement the last three years because we interpreted the appointment of *ritviks* as the appointment of gurus."

(HH Tamala Krishna Goswami, Topanga Canyon, December 3rd, 1980)

" > After Srila Prabhupada named some disciples to initiate. . ."
(this is a quote from the now withdrawn GBC paper "On My Order Understood").

"This is a finesse. To initiate *whom*? In context (events in July 1977), the only straightforward answer is "To initiate people who would then become Srila Prabhupada's disciples."

(HH Jayadvaita Swami, analysis of the 'May 28th, 1977 Conversation', December 13th, 2003, accepted by GBC)

"The conversation with Tamal was referring to the assumption that the 11 *ritviks* chosen to initiate on Prabhupada's behalf during his presences did not automatically become the next *acaryas* or initiating spiritual masters. Mostly everyone agrees with this."

(HH Janananda Goswami, personal letter, 2005)

Bhakti Charu Swami: Actually, one of the questions is that whether Prabhupada really appointed them as guru. Because so far we didn't find the... enough proof to confirm that...

Sridhara Maharaja: What is the basis of the *acaryas*?

Bhakti Charu Swami: That is Prabhupada said that they can be *ritviks*.

Sridhara Maharaja: They can be?

Bhakti Charu Swami: *Ritvik*.

Sridhara Maharaja: *Ritvik*.

Bhakti Charu Swami: Yes, on behalf of Prabhupada they can initiate.

Sridhara Maharaja: During his lifetime. During his lifetime these eleven were appointed as his assistant. They could also initiate during his lifetime?

Bhakti Charu Swami: No, not during his lifetime. During his lifetime ... they can initiate on behalf of Prabhupada. But after Prabhupada left, who will initiate Prabhupada did not clearly mention. This doubt is coming up now. [...] "Who is initiating...he is grand-disciple."

Here it sounds that Prabhupada is saying that actually they are Prabhupada's disciples. Who is initiating? Who is actually initiating? Prabhupada is initiating...

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami Conversation with Sridhara Maharaja, Navadvipa, Mayapur, August 18th, 1980)

2. The *ritviks* unauthorisedly became *diksa* gurus

IRM says:

The *ritviks* were never ordered to turn into *diksa* gurus, and their doing so usurped Srila Prabhupada's position as ISKCON's *diksa* Guru (modification "B" from *The Final Order*).

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"Srila Prabhupada never said 'here are the next eleven *acaryas*, and they are authorised gurus for the movement'. He did not do that."
(HG Ravindra Svarupa Das, San Diego Debate Video, 1990)

"Srila Prabhupada did not appoint anyone to be guru for the future."
(HH Jayadvaita Swami, San Diego Debate Video, 1990)

"But the problem started when some individuals became gurus after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance. They were inexperienced and so naturally prone to make mistakes. One of the biggest mistakes they made was to behave like Srila Prabhupada when they became gurus. Literally this meant, what Srila Prabhupada was to his disciples, the gurus became to their disciples."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Disciple's meeting, Text PAMH06829041, May 19th, 2003)

[BTP Note: For a guru to become to his disciples the same as Srila Prabhupada was to his disciples, is to be his successor *diksa* guru. This is "one of the biggest mistakes".]

"I strongly believe that if the gurus had acted as Srila Prabhupada's obedient followers and represented him properly, then they would not have fallen down. The cause of their fall down was actually their offenses to Srila Prabhupada in trying to usurp his position."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Text PAMH07428765, November 3rd, 2003)

3. ISKCON disciples should be initiated by Srila Prabhupada

IRM says:

All members of ISKCON should belong to Srila Prabhupada as his initiated disciples.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"Like some individuals are very open, like Bhakti Marg Maharaja, he is kind of, even, he was telling me yesterday when he gives initiation he tells his disciples that you are actually Prabhupada's disciple and I am taking care of you, trying to help you to become engaged in Srila Prabhupada's mission. Now that's actually the crux of the whole thing, that if everybody understands and make that point clear to their disciples then I think that a lot of our problems will be solved."
(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Toronto meeting, July 20th, 2003)

"Like one of the main things is that we have to understand is that in ISKCON everything belongs to Srila Prabhupada, not only the assets and properties belong to Srila Prabhupada, but even the individuals also belong to Srila Prabhupada. That point has to be very, very clearly established in the sense that everybody knows that all temple and all

the assets belong to Srila Prabhupada. But what about the devotees who join ISKCON – who do they belong to? The way it is becoming nowadays, why the Society is becoming fragmented is because the new devotees, when they become initiated somehow it is felt that they become the assets of the gurus and as a result of that our society is becoming fragmented. But on the other hand, if we consider, if we have the understanding very clear that actually everybody belongs to Srila Prabhupada and the structure Srila Prabhupada created is going to take care of those devotees. The structure of ISKCON is meant to take care of those devotees who join for thousands of years to come.” (HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Toronto meeting, July 20th, 2003)

“I make it very clear to them that disciples in ISKCON do not belong to their gurus; they belong to Srila Prabhupada.” (HH Bhakti Charu Swami *Istagosthi*, April 22nd, 2006)

4. ISKCON meant only for Srila Prabhupada's disciples

IRM says:

ISKCON is an institution meant to train all who come to it to be Srila Prabhupada's disciples.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

“Usually the guru has an *ashram* and his disciples come to the *ashram* and get trained by the guru. [...] ISKCON is Srila Prabhupada's *ashram*. [...] Generally the guru has an *ashram* and he hands over the authority of the *ashram* to one disciple. He appoints a successor. But Srila Prabhupada didn't do that in ISKCON. [...] Rather Prabhupada wanted us to manage the society collectively through the Governing Body.” (HH Bhakti Charu Swami Disciples Meeting, August 1st, 2007)

[BTP Note: The example of the diksa guru who would train disciples in his ashram is used to illustrate how the Vedic tradition regarding diksa would normally function. Bhakti Charu Swami admits that now we simply have a bigger ashram, ISKCON, whose Guru Srila Prabhupada was never replaced by a successor.]

5. Srila Prabhupada gives diksa by transmitting divya-jnana

IRM says:

The *diksa* Guru transmits *divya-jnana* (transcendental knowledge which destroys sinful reactions), and this is transmitted by Srila Prabhupada.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

“Such uplifting knowledge is called *divya-jnana*, and its transmission is called *siksa*. This *divya-jnana* is the principle active ingredient of *diksa*.” (No. 404, GBC Resolutions 1999)

[BTP Note: But all the “pre-eminent”, “essential” and “empowering” siksa, i.e. “uplifting knowledge”, transmitted in ISKCON is received from Srila Prabhupada alone]:

“ISKCON's founder-acarya, Srila Prabhupada, is the pre-eminent and compulsory *siksa-guru* for all vaisnavas (gurus and disciples) in the Society, who may directly receive empowerment from him

through allegiance to his teachings.”

(No. 409, GBC Resolutions 1999)

“Srila Prabhupada's instructions are the essential teachings for every ISKCON devotee.”

(GBC Resolution 35, Founder-Acarya Statement, 1994)

“The *diksa* guru obviously gives *siksa*. The *diksa* is based on *siksa*. [...] Not only that, but since we are not putting the importance on *siksa*, Srila Prabhupada's position as the pre-eminent *siksa* guru of this movement for all the devotees for all time has been minimized.” (HH Bhakti Charu Swami giving *Srimad-Bhagavatam* Class on October 5th, 2000 in Vrindavana, India)

[BTP Note: “According to sastric injunctions, there is no difference between siksa-guru and diksa-guru, and generally the siksa-guru later on becomes the diksa-guru.”

(*Srimad-Bhagavatam*, 4:12:32 purport)

“Generally a spiritual master who constantly instructs a disciple in spiritual science becomes his initiating spiritual master later on.”

(*Sri Caitanya-caritamrta*, *Adi-lila*, 1:35, purport)]

6. Surrender must be to the diksa Guru - Srila Prabhupada

IRM says:

We can surrender to Krishna only by first surrendering to the via medium of the *diksa* Guru. In ISKCON, this *diksa* Guru is Srila Prabhupada.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

“*Diksa* is the process through which one actually surrenders to Krishna through the agency and via medium of the representative of Krishna, the spiritual master.”

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami Disciples Meeting, August 1st, 2007)

“Why do we hesitate to tell a newcomer who is searching for a guru that Srila Prabhupada, the best guru the world has ever seen, is still here, and one can surrender unto him and go back to Godhead very easily?”

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Srila Prabhupada's Disappearance Day, October 31st, 2000)

Q: “In *Bhagavad-gita* Krishna tells us to surrender to the spiritual master. Although in the temple we receive guidance from many senior devotees, still somehow the relation between the guru and disciple is very unique. We have the relation with the temple president and other temple authorities to guide and correct us as spiritual masters, but sometimes we can't connect with them in the same way.”

A: “[...] Now let us come to your point. Yes, devotees need a qualified spiritual master, and I will say in ISKCON we have the most qualified spiritual master who is Srila Prabhupada. And everyone in ISKCON is meant to represent Srila Prabhupada. In ISKCON who is the ultimate spiritual master? You need a spiritual master, but who is that spiritual master? It is Srila Prabhupada.”

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami Disciples Meeting, August 1st, 2007)

7. Srila Prabhupada as *diksa* Guru delivers ISKCON members

IRM says:

As the *diksa* Guru of ISKCON, Srila Prabhupada alone delivers an ISKCON member to Krishna.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"Generally, a guru establishes a link between Krsna and his disciple. [...] Srila Prabhupada, as the pre-eminent *acarya*, takes you to Krsna and engages you in His service."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami *Istagosthi*, June 10th, 2007)

"... Srila Prabhupada will take you to Krsna."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Durban disciples meeting, April 7th, 2006)

[BTP Note: This is the definition of the bona fide spiritual master as stated in Srila Prabhupada's books: "And if you get a bona fide spiritual master, he will take you to Krsna." (The Laws of Nature, Ch. 1)]

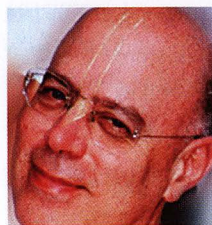
"Just let go of this body and its attachments and put your self in the lotus hands of Srila Prabhupada...and he will take you to Vrindavan!" (HH Radhanath Swami, speaking to his "disciple" Stoka Krishna Das on his deathbed, "His Guru and Grace" video)

"And certainly we are all depending on Srila Prabhupada to intercede with Krishna so that we can attain His shelter. [...] He is surely our guarantee of salvation if we follow his instructions and personal example in our daily life." (HG Kripamoya Das, Chairman, European ISKCON Leaders Conference, *The Vaishnava Voice*, May 6th, 2007)

"How many millions of such souls are there who have yet to write, who are directly experiencing your mercy daily, who read your books with implicit faith, whom you talk to in dreams and pictures, whose lives you change abruptly and reward with tears when chanting the holy names? [...] I think these people are meeting you every day." (HH Sivarama Swami, Srila Prabhupada's *Vyasa Puja* offering, 1994)

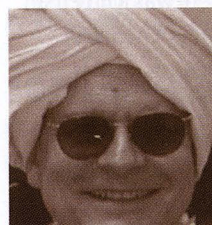
"But in order to improve our attendance and attitudes at the daily *guru-puja*, we have to realize that Srila Prabhupada is present. We must pray for that realization. We should know that he is present on the *vyasasana*; and we should know that he is pleased by our enthusiastic participation. It is not a dull routine, but an opportunity to daily meet and glorify Srila Prabhupada in the most appropriate way."

(Satsvarupa dasa Goswami, *Prabhupada Appreciation*, Gita-nagari Press)



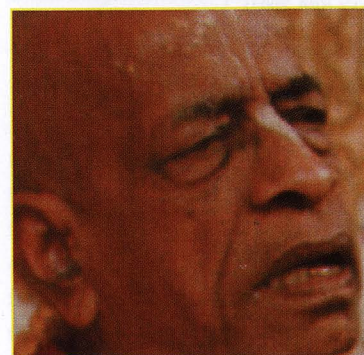
"Myself and the other GBC have done the greatest disservice to this movement the last three years because we interpreted the appointment of *ritviks* as the appointment of gurus."

- HH Tamala Krishna Goswami



"Srila Prabhupada never said 'here are the next eleven *acaryas*, and they are authorised gurus for the movement'. He did not do that."

- Ravindra Svarupa Das



Srila Prabhupada is ISKCON's *diksa* Guru for ISKCON's lifetime.

8. Srila Prabhupada is a living *diksa* Guru

IRM says:

Srila Prabhupada fulfils all the functions of a living *diksa* Guru, by teaching, inspiring, guiding, chastising, talking with, rewarding, meeting with, giving direct access and bestowing full mercy to every member of ISKCON.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"A duly initiated disciple in ISKCON can accept Srila Prabhupada, the founder-*acarya* of ISKCON, as his principle *siksa-guru*. During his devotional life, he may experience that he derives more spiritual inspiration from Srila Prabhupada's books and *vani* than from his own *diksa-guru*." (ISKCON Law 601, GBC Resolutions, 2000)

"Let us recognize that Srila Prabhupada has not gone away. Rather, he has simply disappeared from our vision. Although we are not able to see him any more with our mundane vision, he is very much there, watching us from the spiritual sky. He will always be there to guide us, provided we remain fixed up at his lotus feet. He will reward us when we please him and he will chastise us if we make mistake." (HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Srila Prabhupada's Disappearance Day, October 31st, 2000)

"As such he (Srila Prabhupada) is the Foundational *siksa* guru for all ISKCON devotees. [...] Whether as disciple, grand-disciple, and *siksa* disciple everyone has a direct access to Srila Prabhupada and His Divine Grace's full mercy." (HH Jayapataka Swami, *Ritvik Theory - Out of The Question*, 1998)

PART A - CONCLUSION

ISKCON leaders' words agree with the IRM that:

Srila Prabhupada alone is the *diksa* Guru of ISKCON, for ISKCON's lifetime.

PART B: ISKCON's "gurus" are unauthorised

1. ISKCON guru system is wrong

IRM says:

The current ISKCON guru system is defective.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"After Harikesa fell down in 1998, in 1999 I proposed that it's obvious that we are going in the wrong direction. Now, when you go wrong, when you know you're going in the wrong direction, what do you do? You stop to find the right way. So for the time-being, let's stop giving initiation and find out what is actually the problem and what is the solution to this problem, whether we can find a solution and until then, let us stop."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Toronto meeting, July 20th, 2003)

"Yes, I agree, to begin with, I think at the beginning I said our main problem was introducing a defective initiation system. And that defective system may have been watered down to some extent, but it's still prevailing."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Toronto meeting, July 20th, 2003)

"The follower takes care of his guru's property and that was a big misconception that was entered into our society and that misconception, I will say, is still continuing. Like in 1987, although we had a reform, after so many gurus fell down, there was a fifty man committee was formed and there was reform; it was not actually, at least my perception is that it was not actually a reform. It was kind of watering down the same misconception and continuing. Like what we did was we appointed some more gurus and opened up the world for anybody to initiate wherever he wanted. Whereas previous to that it was a kind of zonal *acarya*. So that I think is the main mistake where we started, that took place after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance that has never been properly rectified."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Toronto meeting, July 20th, 2003)

2. ISKCON guru system based on trial and error

IRM says:

The ISKCON guru system is a concoction, fabricated based on circumstance.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"When you're going to have a single institution with many different spiritual masters and there are many different disciples who are going to have to work together in a co-operative and unified way. Just hadn't been done. How to do it? And to me the only way you can do it is to try this and if that doesn't work try this..... until you finally find what works out. So I think it was very difficult for anyone to foresee, so it seems that the only way to do this is, by is, by trying to do it. And see what works and what doesn't work and Prabhupada himself said that he used the trial and error method so I don't think it is not bona fide."

(HG Ravindra Svarupa Das, 'Issues in ISKCON Reform' lecture, June 29th-July 3rd, 1999)

3. ISKCON "gurus" not authorised by Srila Prabhupada

IRM says:

ISKCON "gurus" are authorised not by Srila Prabhupada, but via this defective ISKCON system, and ISKCON was not ordered by Srila Prabhupada to authorise gurus.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"Your *diksa* guru is giving you *diksa* because the institution of ISKCON decided that he should give *diksa*."

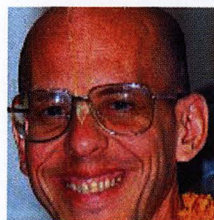
(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Text PAMH06829041, May 19th, 2003)

"That Srila Prabhupada "personally detailed the procedure for increasing the number of initiating guru[s]" is something we can only wish. Or falsely tell the Society he did."

(HH Jayadvaita Swami, analysis of the 'May 28th, 1977 Conversation', December 13th, 2003, accepted by GBC)

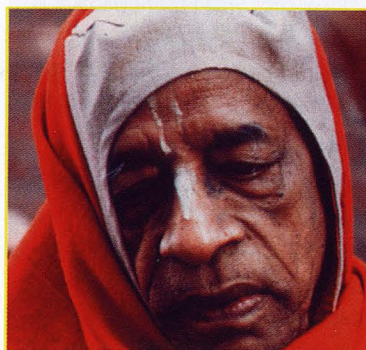
[BTP Note: ISKCON gurus are authorised by the Society. However, a bona fide guru would have to be ordered directly by Srila Prabhupada himself: "A guru can become guru when he is ordered by his guru. That's all. Otherwise nobody can become guru."

(Srila Prabhupada Lecture, October 28th, 1975)]



"That Srila Prabhupada "personally detailed the procedure for increasing the number of initiating guru[s]" is something we can only wish. Or falsely tell the Society he did."

- HH Jayadvaita Swami



Srila Prabhupada never authorised any *diksa* gurus.

PART B - CONCLUSION

ISKCON leaders' words agree with the IRM that:

ISKCON'S current guru system, and therefore its gurus, are unauthorised.



PART C: ISKCON “gurus” should act as *ritviks*

1. ISKCON “gurus” related to “disciples” as *ritviks*

IRM says:

ISKCON “gurus” should only be *ritviks*; then if they fall it will have no affect at all on those initiated, since it is actually Srila Prabhupada who is fulfilling the functions of being their *diksa* Guru and delivering them, and he still remains.

ISKCON’s leadership agrees:

“A devotee joins the movement and is trained and cultivated by ISKCON in the form of the local temple devotees. He is doing fine and being trained up nicely. But then he gets initiated by somebody who comes to that place once in a blue moon, but because he has been initiated by him he begins to think that he is his authority and the local devotees don’t mean anything to him anymore.”

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami Disciples Meeting, August 1st, 2007)

“If for some unfortunate reason gurus leave ISKCON, at least the institutional empowerment doesn’t go with them, it stays here, and devotees should be wise enough and selective enough in that case to stay in Srila Prabhupada’s line, and Srila Prabhupada’s direct service is going on.”

(HH Sivarama Swami, Initiation Lecture, Bhaktivedanta Manor, January 7th, 2007)

“Everyone’s spiritual life is actually anchored onto Srila Prabhupada, Prabhupada’s mercy, Prabhupada’s guidance, Prabhupada’s teachings, then even if the gurus fell down they wouldn’t become totally disappointed with their spiritual life and Iskcon [...] So in this way we saw that although in the past the leaders have fallen down or left the movement, but devotees in general did not become affected by that – why? Because everybody had the understanding very clear that their spiritual life was actually harnessed to Srila Prabhupada or anchored to Srila Prabhupada’s mercy and Prabhupada is going to deliver them.”

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Toronto meeting, July 20th, 2003)

2. ISKCON “gurus” to act the same as they did pre-1978

IRM says:

ISKCON “guru” only acts as *siksa* guru to facilitate surrender to Srila Prabhupada.

ISKCON’s leadership agrees:

“Initiation has two objectives. One is to receive the mantra and the other is to formalize surrender. In today’s context the important consideration is the surrender. [...] if you are surrendering to me, formalizing your surrender, then what kind of responsibility do I have to you? It is to transmit your surrender to the institution of ISKCON. Generally the guru transmits this to Krsna, but here I am not directly representing Krsna. I am representing Krsna through the via medium of Srila Prabhupada and ISKCON.”

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami Disciples Meeting, August 1st, 2007)

“I have mentioned many times that my responsibility as your

spiritual master is to take you to the lotus feet of Srila Prabhupada.”
(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Durban disciples meeting, April 7th, 2006)

[BTP Note: Bhakti Charu Swami accepts that unlike a *diksa* Guru, he does not transmit the surrender of a disciple to Krishna, but rather he is supposed to help one surrender to Srila Prabhupada, thus acting in a manner no different to how every single devotee acted in ISKCON pre-1978: as *siksa* gurus who helped everyone who joined ISKCON surrender to the *diksa* Guru, Srila Prabhupada].

3. ISKCON “gurus” not functioning as gurus

IRM says:

All ISKCON devotees should act in exactly the same way they acted when Srila Prabhupada was physically on the planet, since it is Srila Prabhupada as the *diksa* Guru, and not they, who is leading everyone to Krishna.

ISKCON’s leadership agrees:

“I cannot lead you to Krsna.”

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami *Istagosthi*, March 28th, 2006)

[BTP Note: Bhakti Charu Swami here confirms that Srila Prabhupada, and not he, is the bona fide spiritual master:

“And if you get a bona fide spiritual master, he will take you to Krsna.”

(*The Laws of Nature*, Chapter 1);

“It is illegal to become a spiritual master if one is unable to deliver the disciple.”

(*Srimad-Bhagavatam*, 2.8.7 purport]

4. ISKCON “gurus” authority over “disciples” similar to a *ritvik*

IRM says:

ISKCON “gurus” being only *ritviks*, cannot act as *diksa* gurus in relation to those they “initiate”, and therefore do not have the authority to engage them, or collect *guru daksina* (money gifted to the Guru) from them. Rather, authority for engagement lies with the local temple, and *guru daksina* is collected by ISKCON on behalf of Srila Prabhupada.

ISKCON’s leadership agrees:

“Temple presidents and project leaders are fully responsible for engaging the devotees in their charge. Gurus must first consult with a temple president before talking to a disciple about changing their service.”

(Law 405 (G), GBC Resolutions, 1999)

“*Guru daksina* and other donations offered to *siksa* and *diksa* gurus are the property of ISKCON.”

(Law 405, (I), GBC Resolutions, 1999)

5. ISKCON "gurus" act as *ritviks*, Srila Prabhupada as Guru

IRM says:

ISKCON "gurus" should only be *ritviks*, and therefore ISKCON members would actually be instructed by, and repose their faith in Srila Prabhupada, just as it was done when Srila Prabhupada was on the planet.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"ISKCON leaders shall teach that Srila Prabhupada's books and teachings are the foundation of the spiritual lives of all ISKCON members. Therefore, all ISKCON members shall consider it their compulsory duty to study Srila Prabhupada's books. Hearing from other devotee's books and teachings is secondary and supplemental and should not be done at the expense of hearing regularly from Srila Prabhupada."

(Law 405 (F), GBC Resolutions, 1999)

"As it is enjoined in scripture that a devotee must honor his spiritual master, ISKCON members shall be trained to place their faith, trust and allegiance first and foremost in the Founder-Acarya who is the pre-eminent *siksa* guru for every member of ISKCON."

(Law 406, (A) 7.1.1, GBC Resolutions, 1999)

[BTP Note: "According to sastric injunctions, there is no difference between *siksa*-guru and *diksa*-guru, and generally the *siksa*-guru later on becomes the *diksa*-guru."

(*Srimad-Bhagavatam*, 4:12:32, purport)

"Generally a spiritual master who constantly instructs a disciple in spiritual science becomes his initiating spiritual master later on."

(*Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta*, *Adi-lila*, 1:35, purport)]

6. ISKCON "gurus" act as *ritviks* in relation to the movement

IRM says:

ISKCON today can not have any *diksa* gurus other than Srila Prabhupada, and therefore those conducting initiations, being *ritviks*, are simply the agents of the local temple, and have no role in ISKCON's authority system, which would continue unchanged from that which existed when Srila Prabhupada was on the planet.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

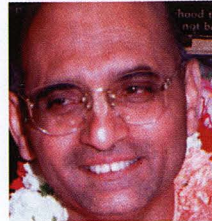
"We must recognize that our first loyalty is to the local temple and the temple authority. And as a spiritual master what should I do? I think as a spiritual master it is my responsibility to reconfirm and re-establish that relationship with the local temple and temple authority."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami Disciples Meeting, August 1st, 2007)

"And what is the line of authority structure in ISKCON? The line of authority is that Srila Prabhupada is the founder-*acarya* of ISKCON. Where does our ultimate loyalty lie? It lies with Srila Prabhupada. Then Prabhupada pointed out that the GBC is the ultimate managing authority in ISKCON. In the line of authority, next to Srila Prabhupada is the GBC body and then there is the GBC member; every zone has a GBC member who is the zonal secretary. So we should be loyal to

the GBC body and to the GBC member. And then there is the temple unit, and in the temple who is the person in charge of the temple? It is the temple president. And then there is the temple council or temple management committee. In this way we have the line of authority."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami Disciples Meeting, August 1st, 2007)



"my responsibility as your spiritual master is to take you to the lotus feet of Srila Prabhupada. [...] I cannot lead you to Kṛṣṇa."

- HH Bhakti Charu Swami

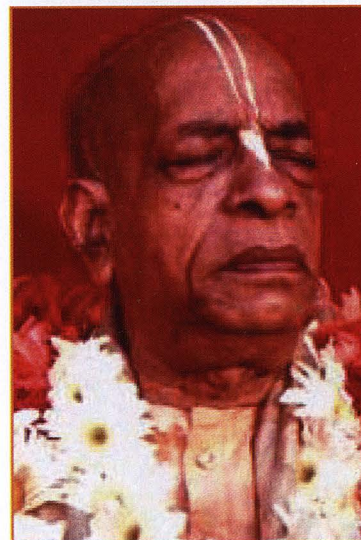
"And if you get a bona fide spiritual master, he will take you to Kṛṣṇa."

(His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, *The Laws of Nature*, Chapter 1)



"If for some unfortunate reason gurus leave ISKCON, at least the institutional empowerment doesn't go with them, it stays here [...] and Srila Prabhupada's direct service is going on."

- HH Sivarama Swami



Srila Prabhupada is the *diksa* Guru, with ISKCON leaders only acting as *ritviks* on his behalf.

PART C - CONCLUSION

ISKCON leaders' words agree with the IRM that:

ISKCON is only supposed to contain *ritviks* and *siksa* gurus, and no *diksa* Gurus other than Srila Prabhupada.



PART D: Objections to the IRM's case are false

1. "Ritvik will stop the parampara (disciplic succession)"

IRM says:

ISKCON cannot argue that the *parampara* stops as soon as the *diksa* guru leaves the planet, and thus can only be continued with a "living" *diksa* guru successor, when ISKCON gurus themselves are not providing "living" *diksa* guru successors to "carry on the *parampara*" after they leave the planet.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

HH Gaura Govinda Swami – Departed 1996, no successor

"Parampara stopped" for 12 years *

HH Tamala Krishna Goswami – Departed 2002, no successor

"Parampara stopped" for 6 years

HH Sridhara Swami – Departed 2004, no successor

"Parampara stopped" for 4 years

HH Bhakti Tirtha Swami – Departed 2005**, no successor

"Parampara stopped" for 3 years

HH Bhakti Svarupa Damodara Swami – Departed 2006, no successor

"Parampara stopped" for over 1 year

*(At the time of press – 2008)

** "Gurudeva did not leave, or could he possibly leave a successor"

(Bhakti Tirtha Swami disciples forum, July 8th, 2006)

2. "The law of disciplic succession"

IRM says:

The private letter sent by Srila Prabhupada to deviant disciple Tusta Krishna Swami on December 2nd, 1975, given below, is not evidence that Srila Prabhupada should have stopped initiating on his departure.

"But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of your Spiritual master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples without any limitation. This is the law of disciplic succession."

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"I accept that this quotation (*given above*) doesn't "prove" that a departed *acarya* can't initiate. I never said it does."

(HH Jayadvaita Swami, June 4th, 2004)

"303. Initiating in the Presence of One's *Diksa-Guru*

[ISKCON LAW]

Resolved, That ISKCON Law 6.3.2. is amended to state: As taught by Srila Prabhupada, the etiquette of not initiating in the presence of one's *diksa-guru* will be upheld in ISKCON. However, Srila Prabhupada and historical precedents also teach us that disciples may sometimes initiate in the physical presence of their *diksa* gurus. If a *diksa* guru desires for this to happen, he can direct his disciple to go through the normal GBC procedure for initiating."

(GBC resolution 303, 2002)

[BTP Note: Thus the GBC have themselves ditched the above "law", now allowing any "grand-disciple" to become "guru" in the physical presence of their "guru", with a number of "grand-disciples" already acting as such.]

3. The May 28th, 1977 conversation

IRM says:

In the May 28th, 1977 conversation, Srila Prabhupada only mentions "grand-disciples" and "disciples of my disciples", and thus his disciples becoming gurus, if and when he gives an order for this to happen. This order was never given, but rather simply assumed that it was "implicit" and "intended".

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

>When Srila Prabhupada was asked who would initiate after
>his physical departure he stated he would "recommend"
>and give his "order" to some of his disciples who would
>initiate on his behalf during his lifetime and afterwards as
>"regular gurus," whose disciples would be Srila Prabhupada's
>grand-disciples.

(The above is a quote from the now withdrawn GBC paper "On My Order Understood").

"Again, this is what we might reasonably *conclude* from what Srila Prabhupada stated. But it is *not* directly what he stated." (HH Jayadvaita Swami, analysis of the 'May 28th, 1977 Conversation', December 13th, 2003, accepted by GBC)

"Now, I agree that what His Divine Grace intended by this was that these *rtviks*, after his departure, would initiate disciples on their own and that this is implicit in the conversation."

(HH Jayadvaita Swami, analysis of the 'May 28th, 1977 Conversation', December 13th, 2003, accepted by GBC)

"Srila Prabhupada never quite comes out and says: "select some of you to take up the service of initiating new disciples," does he? Yes, I agree it's implicit."

(HH Jayadvaita Swami, analysis of the 'May 28th, 1977 Conversation', December 13th, 2003, accepted by GBC)

"Oh, bull! What Srila Prabhupada said was, "Because in my presence one should not become guru, so on my behalf, on my order... *Amara ajnaya guru haya*. Be actually guru, but by my order." How does that equal "I will give my order"?"

(HH Jayadvaita Swami, analysis of the 'May 28th, 1977 Conversation', December 13th, 2003, accepted by GBC)

"Who is initiating...he is grand-disciple." - Here it sounds that Prabhupada is saying that actually they are Prabhupada's disciples. Who is initiating? Who is actually initiating? Prabhupada is initiating..."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami Conversation with Sridhara Maharaja, Navadvipa, Mayapur, August 18th, 1980)

4. The order to "become guru"

IRM says:

Srila Prabhupada's many exhortations to his disciples to "become guru" do not refer to them becoming *diksa* gurus (and therefore taking Srila Prabhupada's place), but just to become preachers and teachers to assist Srila Prabhupada.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

[BTP Note: The 4 "circumstances" referred to below are:-

a. Where the order for guruship is given in the present tense - Srila Prabhupada has clearly stated that one should not become a *diksa* guru unless he has left the planet.

b. When the order for guruship is given to persons who are not yet initiated - Srila Prabhupada states that one would at least need to be his initiated disciple to become a *diksa* guru.

c. When the order for guruship is given in conjunction with the "amara ajnaya" verse since a relevant purport states: "It is best not to accept any disciples" - this is counter to the whole purpose of being a *diksa* guru.

d. When the order for guruship requires a very minimal level of advancement, such as stating that even children can do it etc., since Srila Prabhupada has stated that only a maha-bhagavata can become a *diksa* Guru - this quote is given in The Final Order (see back page).

- which cover all of Srila Prabhupada's "become guru" "orders" to his disciples.]

"What you would have to show here is that in these 4 circumstances, Srila Prabhupada states that one can or should become a *siksha* guru. If he says simply "become a guru", then guru can be taken to mean a teacher, the literal sense of the word. In the case of *siksha* and *diksha*, there is a stage in which one formally accepts a guru and enters into a guru-disciple relationship. Followers of Sridhara Swami of the Gaudiya Matha used to quote Prabhupada as saying that Sridhara Swami was his "*siksa* guru". But as we know, Prabhupada never entered into a formal guru-disciple relationship with Sridhara Swami. There are other instances in which we can see the word guru being used to mean a teacher of Krishna consciousness. On the other hand, Bhaktivinode Thakur accepted Jagannatha Das Babaji as his *siksha* guru, and his main guru. Thus the "four cases" you mentioned would not apply to such a primary guru-disciple relationship, on the level of *siksha* or *diksha*." (HH Hridayananda Das Goswami, August 13th, 1997, emphasis added)

The full exchange can be viewed at:

www.iskconirm.com/hrdayananda_master_of_evasion.htm

5. "We must follow historical precedent"

IRM says:

ISKCON cannot argue that Srila Prabhupada's *ritvik* system must be rejected because it is without historical precedent, when ISKCON itself is not following historical precedent.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"What we were trying to do, now you have to understand, had never been done. It had just never been done, and to me it's entirely natural that in this case when you're doing something that had never been done; when you're going to have a single institution with many different spiritual masters and there are many different disciples who are going to have to work together in a cooperative and unified way. Just hadn't been done."

(HG Ravindra Svarupa Das, 'Issues in ISKCON Reform' lecture, June 29th-July 3rd, 1999)

"This is the first time in Vaisnava history that we see a functioning worldwide institution with a committee in charge. We are in uncharted waters!"

(HH Trivikrama Swami, "Dandavats" website, June 18th, 2007)

6. "We must follow tradition"

IRM says:

ISKCON cannot argue that Srila Prabhupada's *ritvik* system must be rejected because it is not traditional, when ISKCON is not following tradition anyway.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"Now, had it been a situation where the institution wasn't there, then probably that could have been the case, but generally that was the old traditional understanding in India that the guru leaves the planet and the disciple initiates and then it is that guru's responsibility to guide his disciples. But ISKCON was something very different from that."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Toronto meeting, July 20th, 2003)

"But he was trying to change something, and set up a GBC, but we learn that Bhaktisiddhanta had wanted the same thing to happen and it did not happen, because the idea of this GBC is not exactly traditional."

(HG Ravindra Svarupa Das, 'Issues in ISKCON Reform' lecture, June 29th-July 3rd, 1999)

"Usually the guru has an *ashram* and his disciples come to the *ashram* and get trained by the guru. [...] Generally the guru has an *ashram* and he hands over the authority of the *ashram* to one disciple. He appoints a successor. But Srila Prabhupada didn't do that in ISKCON." (HH Bhakti Charu Swami Disciples Meeting, August 1st, 2007)

7. "Ritvik is completely untraditional"

IRM says:

Having seen that ISKCON itself is not following tradition, we also find that in any case the *ritvik* single guru system is based on a traditional model of leadership.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"Two deviations from Prabhupada's order - the "zonal *acarya*" system and the "posthumous *ritvik*" system - rest on adherence to the traditional idea of leadership."

(HG Ravindra Svarupa Das, *Allegiance to Guru, to ISKCON and to Prabhupada*, 1998)

"In effect, the Matha reverted to an ancient, tradition model of leadership, in which a single guru, recognized by all as



possessing exceptional spiritual power is elevated above all others to rule autocratically at the seat at the head of the institution.”
(HG Ravindra Svarupa Das, *Pillars of Success*)

8. “The guru must be “living”, i.e. physically present”

IRM says:

The guru-disciple relationship does not require the guru to be physically present, since he can guide and offer association through his instructions.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

“But I would offer that there is a misconception here in guru-disciple relationship. Of course, it is certainly nice if one can have some personal instruction, a personal direction in one's life from the spiritual master. But one's success in Krishna consciousness is not necessarily based on that. [...] Srila Prabhupada personally interacted with his spiritual master maybe three or four occasions. I think, he wrote two letters to Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati, and received one reply. And if one's advancement in Krishna Consciousness is dependent upon the personal association of the spiritual master, directing one in one's daily activities, then what are the chances of me in perfecting my Krishna consciousness because my spiritual master passed away in 1977? I haven't seen Srila Prabhupada almost twenty years. [...] So I think there is a fallacy, there is something wrong in this mentality, that the spiritual master is not taking proper care of his disciples if he is not able to answer each and every one of their letters. The spiritual master is not Krishna. He can't expand himself in 16,108 forms and personally be with each disciple. [...] That's the way I follow myself in my relationship with Prabhupada, my spiritual master. I had the liberty in one or two occasions to ask from Prabhupada for some personal instruction, but now, if I need to understand something, I read the books or I can solve it with my godbrothers. So then I ask the disciples to do the same. [...] But we do have the knowledge. It is available in Srila Prabhupada's books [...]”

(HH Indradyumna Swami, Text COM:1974636, 1999)

“[...] a young teenage girl who had been regularly attending my lectures in Kaunas asked me a very important question. She asked me how she could maintain in my absence the same enthusiasm for Krishna consciousness that she was feeling in my presence. [...] I explained to her that there are two different forms of the spiritual master. One is called his *vapuh*, his physical presence. And the other is called his *vani*, his vibrational presence. Although the physical presence is more easily experienced and appreciated, the vibrational presence, although more subtle and difficult to experience, is many, many times more important. [...] *Vani*, the vibrational presence is the instructions we receive from the spiritual master. This can be in the form of something he personally told us or it can be a general instruction that he has given to everyone. The instruction can be spoken. It can be on an audio or video recording. Or it can be written in a letter, book, or article. No matter in which way the instruction is given and received, it is fully active and potent. By comparative analysis it can be seen that *vani* is more important than *vapuh*. [...] The spiritual master cannot be in every place at once.”
(HG Sankarshan Das Adhikari, Lecture, November 9th 2007).

“Nevertheless, you can rest assured that spiritual relationships are not limited to material time and space. Although you did not meet him when he was physically present you can endeavor to cultivate your relationship with him.”

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami *Istagosthi*, April 10th, 2006)

9. “ISKCON “gurus” needed to provide physical contact”

IRM says:

One cannot insist that ISKCON “gurus” are required as substitutes for Srila Prabhupada since they can provide the constant physical association and direction which Srila Prabhupada can't, when in many cases they do not do this anyway.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

“Indeed, most spiritual masters in ISKCON travel and preach all over the world and you may be lucky to spend little time in their physical presence” [...] A “realistic expectation of a spiritual master” is that the disciple should be “prepared to be ‘blanked’”.

(“Spiritual Master and Disciple” course notes, Bhaktivedanta Manor, ISKCON UK)

“I have said this before but I will say it again. The disciple-guru relationship does not provide all the necessary ingredients to sustain spiritual life. [...] We probably all know one or two ISKCON gurus who, with over 500 disciples have, on occasion, forgotten disciples names, personal circumstances, or just didn't get to hear about their spiritual struggles until it was too late. The 1-500 ratio does not always make for effective communication, support, confidential discussion, relevant advice, and regular personal encouragement.”
(HG Kripamoya Das, “A surprising truth”, *The Vaishnava Voice*, August 20th, 2007)

10. “Guru must be physically present to give initiation”

IRM says:

Initiation does not require the *diksa* Guru to be physically present, and indeed Srila Prabhupada initiated many disciples without ever having met them.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

“For almost five years I had seen and known Prabhupada visually from photos [...] But I had never seen Prabhupada in person [...] Then I understood that the spiritual master is non different than his picture. [...] Srila Prabhupada was a transparent media. He transmitted complete and perfect knowledge with no personal slant. I accepted the information I was receiving from the book as perfect and yet could not recognise its author as my eternal spiritual guide. [...] That was the first personal contact with his Divine Grace, although I had been an initiated devotee for two years.”

(HH Sivarama Swami, *Meeting Srila Prabhupada*)

11. *Bhagavad-gita* 4:34

IRM says:

Verse 4:34 from *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* (Srila Prabhupada's original edition, given overleaf) asking us to approach a bona fide Guru actually refers to Srila Prabhupada himself:

"Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth."

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

Q: "In *Bhagavad-gita* Krishna tells us to surrender to the spiritual master. Although in the temple we receive guidance from many senior devotees, still somehow the relation between the guru and disciple is very unique. We have the relation with the temple president and other temple authorities to guide and correct us as spiritual masters, but sometimes we can't connect with them in the same way."

A: " [...] Now let us come to your point. Yes, devotees need a qualified spiritual master, and I will say in ISKCON we have the most qualified spiritual master who is Srila Prabhupada. And everyone in ISKCON is meant to represent Srila Prabhupada. In ISKCON who is the ultimate spiritual master? You need a spiritual master, but who is that spiritual master? It is Srila Prabhupada." (HH Bhakti Charu Swami Disciples Meeting, August 1st, 2007)

12. "Ritvik is like Christianity"

IRM says:

Srila Prabhupada should remain the *diksa* Guru for the lifetime of ISKCON, with no other gurus replacing him, just as Jesus is the only Guru for the Christians.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"What Jesus is to Christianity and what Muhammed is to Islam, Srila Prabhupada should be that to ISKCON." (HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Day 3, LA Seminar, 'Questions and Answers', Published on June 11th, 2000)

"I had no doubt that Srila Prabhupada was equal to Lord Jesus in every way."

(HH Tamala Krsna Goswami, *Servant of the Servant*, BBT 1984, p.25, emphasis added)

13. Evidence outside of Srila Prabhupada

IRM says:

We must base our conclusions only on the words of Srila Prabhupada, and not try and "jump over" him and quote from outside his teachings.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"...we must see the previous *acaryas* through Prabhupada. We cannot jump over Prabhupada and then look back at him through the eyes of previous *acaryas*."

(*Our Original Position*, GBC Press, p.163)

14. Criticising, "aparadha" and being "offensive"

IRM says:

Activities meant to reform deviations from Srila Prabhupada's orders, even if it involves criticising devotees, is permissible.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"There is no doubt that in the activities of reform I had to

criticize many devotees who—deviations and shortcomings notwithstanding—harbored an inviolable seed of devotion to Prabhupada and Krsna."

(HG Ravindra Svarupa Das, *Pillars of Success*)

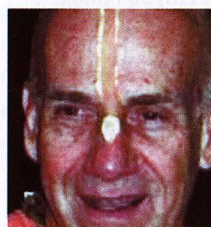
"As the GBC cannot be expected to take needed action to stop deviations before they become disasters, it seems the only recourse for responsible members of ISKCON is to take the matter to gutter level, i.e. the internet. Painful and undignified as such public laundry-washing may be, it might at least create an awareness of deviations and warn devotees not to get sidelined into weird cults going on in the name of ISKCON."

(HH Bhakti Vikash Swami, PAMHO Text: 7160561, March 23rd, 2003)



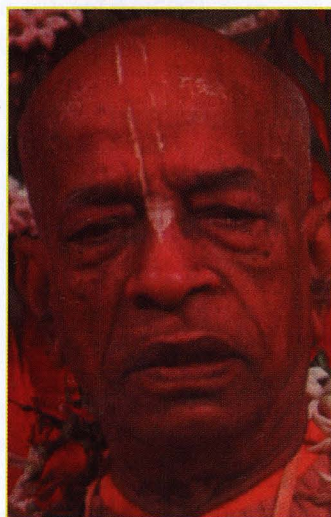
"Of course, it is certainly nice if one can have some personal instruction, a personal direction in one's life from the spiritual master. But one's success in Krishna consciousness is not necessarily based on that."

- HH Indradyumna Swami



"This is the first time in Vaisnava history that we see a functioning worldwide institution with a committee in charge. We are in uncharted waters!"

- HH Trivikrama Swami



All objections to Srila Prabhupada's status as ISKCON's *diksa* Guru defeated!

PART D - CONCLUSION

ISKCON leaders' words agree with the IRM that:

ISKCON's objections to the IRM's position are without merit.



PART E: ISKCON is failing on all fronts

1. GBC is deviating

IRM says:

The GBC and ISKCON's leaders are not following Srila Prabhupada.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"And now the GBC has become very, very weak. The principal reason for this has been the fall-down of spiritual masters and the decay of spiritual authority in general. This applies to *sannyasis*, gurus and the GBC. There has been a big overlap of these three categories, and they are all in disrepute. The renounced order of life has come to be called the denounced order of life - we hear that all the time. People are very dubious about gurus - everyone is wondering when the next one is going to fall. And the GBC seems to be floundering and cannot do anything about it. There is a feeling that we do not know where our vision is going to come from."

(HG Ravindra Svarupa Das, GBC Chairman, *ISKCON Communications Journal*, #8.1, January/June 2000).

"The status of the GBC in the eyes of the general devotees is rock bottom and could hardly go lower."

(HH Bhakti Vikash Swami, July 22nd, 2000)

"The main problem is that the GBC Body is supposed to supervise ISKCON and they are not doing this service adequately. Therefore, many leaders are not acting strictly according to the directions of his Divine Grace."

(HH Prahladananda Swami, August 30th, 2006)

"Unfortunately, since the departure of Srila Prabhupada, the GBC Body has not maintained his clear authority structure. [...] In the absence of a GBC Body that clearly represents the desires of Srila Prabhupada to preach Krsna consciousness as a unified movement, the Society remains together more on the basis of a loose confederation of initiating gurus and independent local leaders, than as a unified movement of surrendered servants."

(HH Prahladananda Swami, *Duties of GBC and Guru in ISKCON*, 2006)

"This year certain things done (and not done) by the GBC body and by some of its members and functionaries have sorely alienated me. I see sustained and determined behavior I look upon as spiritually offensive, philosophically off track, ethically crummy, and pragmatically ill advised."

(HH Jayadvaita Swami, *Sannyasa* report, 2006-2007)

2. GBC is lost

IRM says:

ISKCON's leaders have no idea how to solve its problems.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"So that I think is the main mistake where we started, that took place after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance that has never been properly rectified. Now, how do we rectify it? I mean, I'll say, I don't know. [...] The understanding is here that things have gone wrong, and how to, you know, like, how things went wrong, and what the rectification,

what the measures are, [...] Now how things can be set right, for the benefit... My honest answer will be to tell you frankly, I don't know, I don't know..."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Toronto meeting, July 20th, 2003)

"In Prabhupada's system, the way Prabhupada actually structured ISKCON, there was, the GBC was the ultimate managing authority and anybody joining ISKCON was meant to be under the GBC. But unfortunately, due to the way the guru thing has come up, the GBC has become weak or you can even say impotent, and the gurus have become too powerful for anyone to correct them when they make mistakes."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Toronto meeting, July 20th, 2003)

3. ISKCON "gurus" not advanced

IRM says:

ISKCON's gurus have deviated from Srila Prabhupada's orders, and therefore ISKCON gurus are not *uttama-adhikaris* (first-class advanced devotees).

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"Such an *uttama-adhikari* Vaisnava is in perfect touch with the Supersoul and at every moment knows the Supreme Lord's desires. [...] To spread Krsna consciousness in the absence of an advanced *uttama-adhikari* Vaisnava, third-class and second-class Vaisnavas must follow the instructions of Srila Prabhupada and learn the art of cooperation."

(HH Prahladananda Swami, *Duties of GBC and Guru in ISKCON*, 2006)

"If the GBC Body sees someone as a self-effulgent *acarya* who is completely aware of the Supersoul and Srila Prabhupada's desires and instructions they can and should follow his/her instructions. No one so far has been seen in that category."

(HH Prahladananda Swami, August 30th, 2006)

"Guru Maharaja answered, "Even if the gurus in ISKCON are not qualified, it doesn't matter.""

(Statement of HH Bhakti Charu Swami, reported by his secretary, Text PAMH06643979, March 27th, 2003)

4. ISKCON is deviating

IRM says:

ISKCON is deviating and in a mess.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"How will we deal with our polarized and disintegrating Society?"

(HG Ravindra Svarupa Das, GBC Chairman, Memo, May 2000)

"ISKCON has gone from being beyond Hinduism to being -- very much Hindu! Temples have become centres for making cultural and social events, priests earn a livelihood doing weddings and hair cutting ceremonies, congregational members are encouraged to send their donations and get the blessings of the Lord and their names on plaques. Temples once the exclusive hold of Gaura-Nitai & Radha-

Krishna now are dominated by *murtis* of demigods. In some quarters ISKCON has undergone considerable Indianisation."

(HH Jayadvaita Swami, ISKCON Studies Conference, July 28th, 2007)

"Nevertheless, I will venture here to propose the major reasons why ISKCON is having such a difficult time coming to grips with this matter. The first and foremost is that ISKCON - I put it starkly - has no brain."

(HG Ravindra Svarupa Das, GBC Chairman, "ISKCON and Varnasrama Dharma: A Mission Unfulfilled", January 29th, 1999)

"I don't hesitate to say that things are a mess in our society."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami giving *Srimad-Bhagavatam* Class on October 5th, 2000 in Vrindavana, India)

"Thus ISKCON, which is meant to kick out cheating religion from the world, itself degrades into a cheap cult, an *apasampradaya*, a laughing stock, and a disgrace to Srila Prabhupada and the *parampara*."

"(HH Bhakti Vikash Swami speaking about ISKCON's support for the unusual "alien mothership" theories of fellow guru Bhakti Tirtha Swami, PAMHO Text 7160564, August 23rd, 2003)

5. Preaching is failing

IRM says:

ISKCON's preaching is failing.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"In the UK's Bhaktivedanta Manor, although the number of *ashram* residents remains relatively high compared to the rest of the world, most of the voluntary single staff have been replaced by employed householders receiving a stipend. Many *ashram* bunks are occupied not by local recruits but by devotees migrating from India, Russia and Eastern Europe."

(Rasamanadala Das, Co-ordinator, ISKCON Educational Services, *40 Years of Chant and Change*, 2007)

"Just one-third of the temples distribute books; two-thirds don't do much. [...] This year at the Gaura Purnima festival in Mayapur, two thirds of the registered guests are from Russia."

(GBC report, Monday February 5th, 2007)

"Compared to during Srila Prabhupada's time, ISKCON is stagnant. When you go to the West, you see Indians manning the temples. This means that Westerners are not joining, and Indians, because it is their thing, are joining despite our lack of preaching."

("Insights from Bhakti Charu Swami", Krishna Kripa Das, March 24th, 2007)

"My observation of preaching in America is that our temples seem to be stuck in the mood of maintenance rather than preaching. [...] A lot of the emphasis is on Deity worship and preaching to the Indian population. [...] I think that we are failing to reach the Western population."

(HH Candramauli Swami, *Sannyasa* Report 2006-07)

"ISKCON sometimes takes pride in accomplishments that prove to be only temporary. [...] ISKCON's success appears to be due more to circumstances than to a viable management system that encourages long-term preaching."

(HH Prahladananda Swami, *Duties of GBC and Guru in ISKCON*, 2006)

"In your absence we have become helpless orphans. Although the house you have created for us is still there, we lost the opulence and grandeur that we once inherited from you. We have become like those old aristocrats, who are proud of their exalted lineage but became paupers. Srila Prabhupada, please bless me that I can do something to bring back our lost glory, unify our family and reinstate the spirit that you so effectively installed to ward off the evil influence of Kali and establish Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's *Sankirtan* movement."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, "Offering to Srila Prabhupada", January 1st, 2008)

6. ISKCON gurus losing faith in themselves

IRM says:

ISKCON themselves are losing faith in their crumbling guru system.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"...devotees are often a little stumped thinking, 'well, if someone who has been practicing Krishna consciousness for such a long time can become so misled then what of me?' [...] "One aspect of the answer, it is quite fortunate that devotees who ask those questions aren't in a position of guruship, or leadership, or *sannyasa*; in other words, safe position to be in [...] so if we just stay as humble vaisnavas..."

(HH Sivarama Swami podcast, September 27th, 2007)

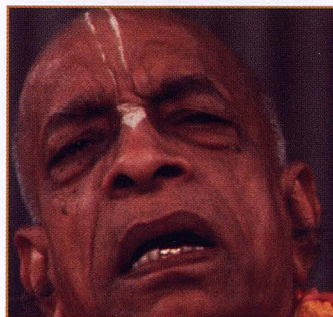
"Spiritual masters, I hate to use the word, I don't like it so much I would rather prefer *sannyasis*, senior vaisnavas, GBCs; when they are preaching in public they should be advertised, but such advertisement is necessary but not on the basis of their being gurus."

(HH Sivarama Swami, "GBC resolutions on the worship of guru", podcast July 21st, 2006)



"Thus ISKCON, which is meant to kick out cheating religion from the world, itself degrades into a cheap cult, an *apasampradaya*, a laughing stock, and a disgrace to Srila Prabhupada and the *parampara*."

- HH Bhakti Vikash Swami



Disobeying Srila Prabhupada, beginning with removing him as the *diksa* Guru for ISKCON, has led to ISKCON failing.

PART E - CONCLUSION

ISKCON leaders' words agree with the IRM that:

ISKCON and its leadership are deviating and failing.



PART F: The IRM is acting with sincerity

1. IRM is sincere

IRM says:

It is acting with the best of intentions to follow Srila Prabhupada's orders.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"There is no doubt that both ISKCON's leadership and the IRM have acted and are acting to establish what each considers the correct theological conclusion with regard to the affairs of gurus and disciples."

(GBC submission, *The Rival Positions in the IRM-GBC Controversy within ISKCON*, Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg, December 24th, 2004)

"The particular ideas put forward by those who espouse the *ritvik* doctrine are sincerely heart-felt and have developed out of concern for the well being of ISKCON's members."

(HG Kripamoya Das, Chairman, European ISKCON Leaders Conference, *The Vaishnava Voice*, February 8th, 2007)

"What is it they see about ISKCON's present way of doing things that makes them want to go in for even such a poor alternative as the *ritvik* one? Some are just "sour grapes." [...] But some, it's equally clear, are sincere, intelligent, thoughtful, and devoted to Srila Prabhupada and Krsna."

(HH Jayadvaita Swami, *Where The Ritviks Are Right*, January 1996)

2. IRM's position has substance

IRM says:

IRM's position is worthy of consideration.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"They can find sufficient quotes to justify their position, and of course so can we. What to do? Ultimately it comes down to your choice."

(Letter from HG Kripamoya Das, Chairman, European ISKCON Leaders Conference, speaking of the IRM, June 23rd, 2005)

"[...] Very good point. I will say that the *ritviks* do have some points."

(HH Bhakti Charu Swami, Day 3, LA Seminar, 'Questions and Answers', published on June 11, 2000)

3. Back To Prabhupada magazine has substance

IRM says:

Its magazine, *Back To Prabhupada*, is based on solid research, and is beneficial for ISKCON.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"The magazine is very well produced on glossy paper with colour photographs and well-researched articles. [...] Now of course, this sort of passionate expression of thoughts and feelings is beneficial, even when accompanied by zealous table thumping and highly charged journalism. [...] The energetic discussion of ideas and political reform within a movement like ours is not only to be expected, but

encouraged. Writing, debate, and campaigning should be regarded as a sign of intellectual vitality, particularly within a spiritual community that wishes to avoid the theological constipation that debilitates many religious organisations."

(HG Kripamoya Das, Chairman, European ISKCON Leaders Conference, "Thoughts on *Back to Prabhupada* magazine", *The Vaishnava Voice*, February 8th, 2007)

"One very effective propaganda technique that [BTP] employs is to give the example of one ISKCON guru after another who went astray. I have to admit I share the same disgusted feelings that Krishna Kant has in this regard."

(HG Sankarshan Das, February 10th, 2004)

4. IRM is ISKCON's watchdog

IRM says:

By exposing ISKCON's deviations we create pressure to force them to take action.

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"I am sharing this information with you in the hope that doing so will be to ISKCON's benefit. I am sure the IRM would be very happy to do something with this information. Unless something is done this will probably end up in their next publication."

(HG Gauri Das, Temple President, Bhaktivedanta Manor, headquarters of ISKCON UK, email to HH Jayadvaita Swami, "Financial disclosures by ISKCON leaders", January 2nd, 2004)

[BTP Note: This refers to ISKCON leaders not disclosing their financial assets as required by a GBC resolution.]

5. Everyone should support the IRM's mission

IRM says:

Since ISKCON "gurus" are not authorised to act as *diksa* gurus, ISKCON devotees must protest against these false gurus, even if it means protesting against one's own "guru".

ISKCON's leadership agrees:

"Srila Prabhupada did say we should keep the *Acarya* in the center. [...] If one of his followers, who happens to have the duty of initiating in his ISKCON society, undermines or minimizes the instructions found in his books and lectures then how can we expect a sincere ISKCON devotee not to protest, even if the one minimizing him happens to have given him initiation?"

(HH Trivikrama Swami, "Dandavats" website, June 18th, 2007)

PART F - CONCLUSION

ISKCON leaders' words agree with the IRM that:

The IRM is acting with sincere intentions to try and rectify the problems within ISKCON.

SUMMARY

The foregoing 6 section conclusions, comprising 42 points, represent the basic message which the ISKCON Revival Movement (IRM) has been trying to put forward for many years via its numerous papers, and now *BTP* magazine. Hence due to our intense preaching, some of ISKCON's leadership have been influenced to become more "Prabhupada-friendly", and have thus unwittingly ended up agreeing with our main conclusions. In our first Special Summary Issue we had already demonstrated using Srila Prabhupada's direct statements that he is ISKCON's *diksa* (initiating) Guru, and that ISKCON today is deviating from his orders. Now we have done it using the words of ISKCON's leaders themselves. Take your pick! What more proof is needed? Either way, the IRM's position has been substantiated from every angle, beyond a shadow of a doubt.

The words of ISKCON's leaders agree with the following 6 conclusions:

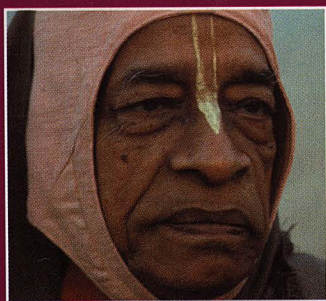
- 1) Srila Prabhupada is ISKCON's *diksa* Guru (initiating spiritual master).
- 2) ISKCON is only supposed to have *ritviks* (officiating priests) and *sikhs* (instructing) gurus, but no *diksagurus*, other than Srila Prabhupada.
- 3) ISKCON's current guru system, and hence its gurus, are unauthorised.
- 4) ISKCON's objections to the IRM's position have no merit.
- 5) ISKCON and its leadership are deviating, and in a mess.
- 6) The IRM is acting sincerely to try and implement Srila Prabhupada's orders.

Followers and supporters of ISKCON have to agree with their own leadership even if they do not agree with the IRM!

In practise, of course, ISKCON does not obey Srila Prabhupada's orders as presented by the IRM, even though we may have exposed them agreeing with us, but rather continues to deviate; and the results are plain for all to see, as they themselves admit. They may admit that effectively Srila Prabhupada is the *diksa* Guru and that they should be no more than glorified *ritviks* with no potency and power, yet they still refuse to ACT on this understanding, but rather continue to usurp Srila Prabhupada's position and mislead people off the correct path of properly serving Srila Prabhupada. Thus, the 80-odd ISKCON "gurus" continue to take disciples, service, privileges and benefits, which by their own words should belong to Srila Prabhupada alone. However, having exposed ISKCON's leadership agreeing with us is, of course, a start. This hypocrisy of saying one thing but doing another is only to be expected, since the Vedic scriptures state that we live in the age of hypocrisy, *Kali-yuga*, and hypocrisy is the characteristic of this age:

"This is the age, Kali. It is called Kali. Hypocrisy, simply hypocrisy. Kali means full of hypocrisy."

(Srila Prabhupada Lecture, November 26th, 1966)



Thus, the debate is now long over.

Only the cheating and hypocrisy remains.

ISKCON's opposition to the IRM can be defeated simply by quoting their own leaders.

Srila Prabhupada - the real Hare Krishna Guru

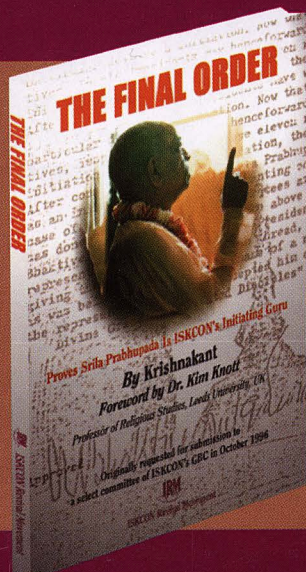
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